Component of Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 75-001-X
Perspectives on Labour and Income

Article

Unionization 2011

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October 26, 2011

Statistics Canada Statistique Canada

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ON LABOUR AND INCOME

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0^s	value rounded to 0 (zero) where a meaningful distinction exists between true zero and the value rounded
p	preliminary
r	revised
x	suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*
E	use with caution
F	too unreliable to be published

Unionization 2011

Sharanjit Uppal

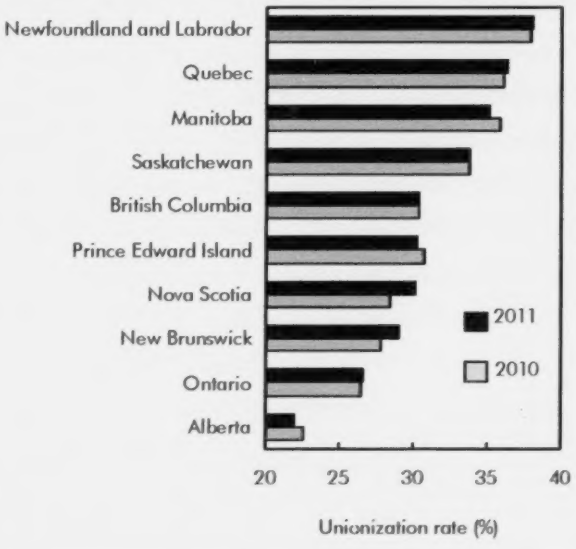
Unionization rates in the first half of 2010 and 2011

Average paid employment (employees) during the first half of 2011 was 14.5 million, an increase of 249,000 over the same period a year earlier (Table 1). The number of unionized employees also increased, by 80,000 (to 4.3 million). However, since union membership rose slightly more rapidly than employment, the unionization rate edged up from 29.6% in 2010 to 29.7% in 2011.

As women experienced disproportionately more gains in unionized jobs, their unionization rate rose to 31.1%. The unionization rate for men remained constant at 28.2%. As a result, the gap in the rates between men and women widened further in 2011.

Gains in unionized jobs were mainly part-time jobs. Unionization among full-time workers remained steady at 31.1%, while the unionization rate of part-time workers rose to 23.6% in 2011.

Chart A Newfoundland and Labrador, the most unionized province; Alberta, the least



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, January-to-June averages.

The unionization rate for permanent employees decreased to 29.9%. However, it increased to 28.0% for those in non-permanent jobs. Between 2010 and 2011, the unionization rate slipped in large (100 employees or more) and small (fewer than 20 employees) firms, but rose slightly for those with 20 to 99 employees.

Data sources

Information on union membership, density and coverage by various socio-demographic characteristics, including earnings, are from the Labour Force Survey. Further details can be obtained from Marc Lévesque, Labour Statistics Division, Statistics Canada at 613-951-4090. Data on strikes, lockouts and workdays lost, and those on major wage settlements were supplied by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC). Further information on these statistics may be obtained from Client services, Workplace Information Directorate, HRSDC at 1-800-567-6866.

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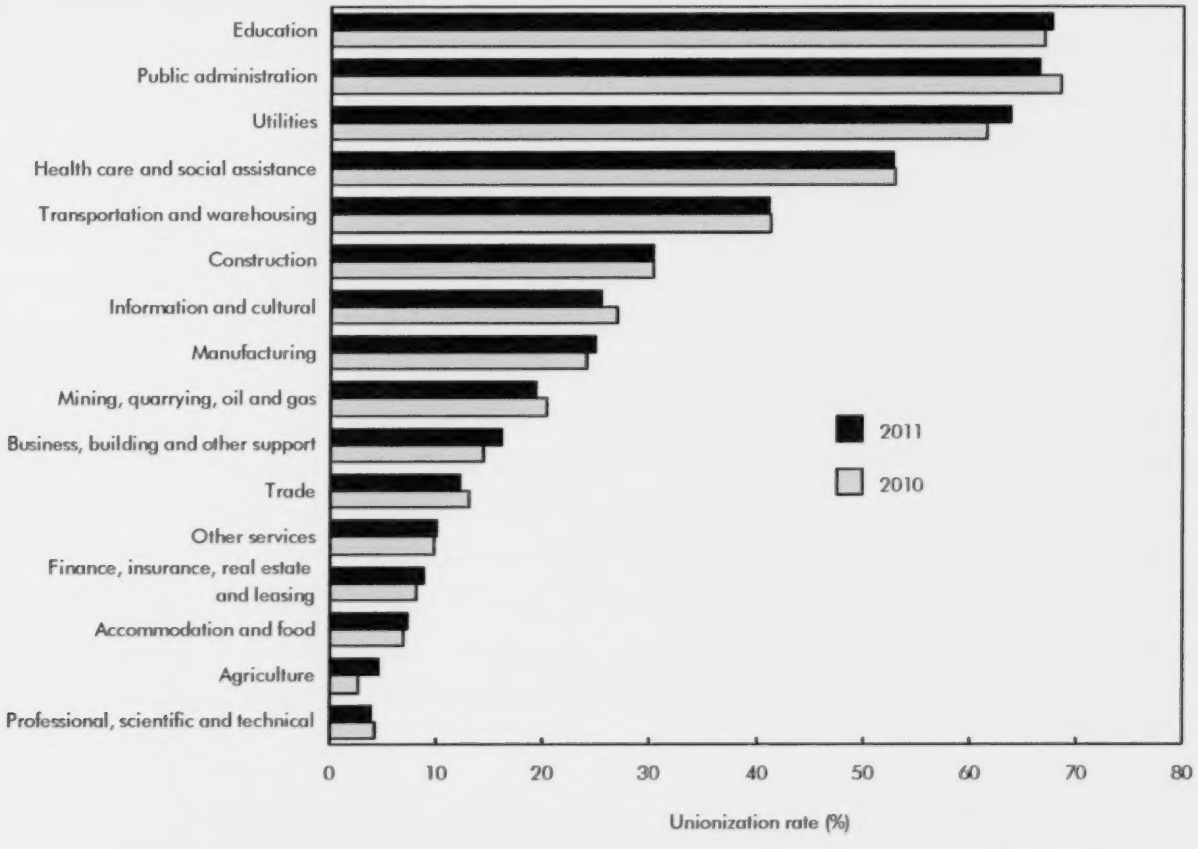
The provincial picture was mixed (Chart A). Five provinces recorded increases in their unionization rate, Nova Scotia recording the largest increase. By contrast, unionization decreased in Prince Edward Island, Manitoba and Alberta.

Changes in unionization rates varied across industries. Notable declines were observed in public administration and information and cultural industries. Notable increases occurred in agriculture, and in utilities. (Chart B).

Chart B The highest unionization rates were in public sector industries

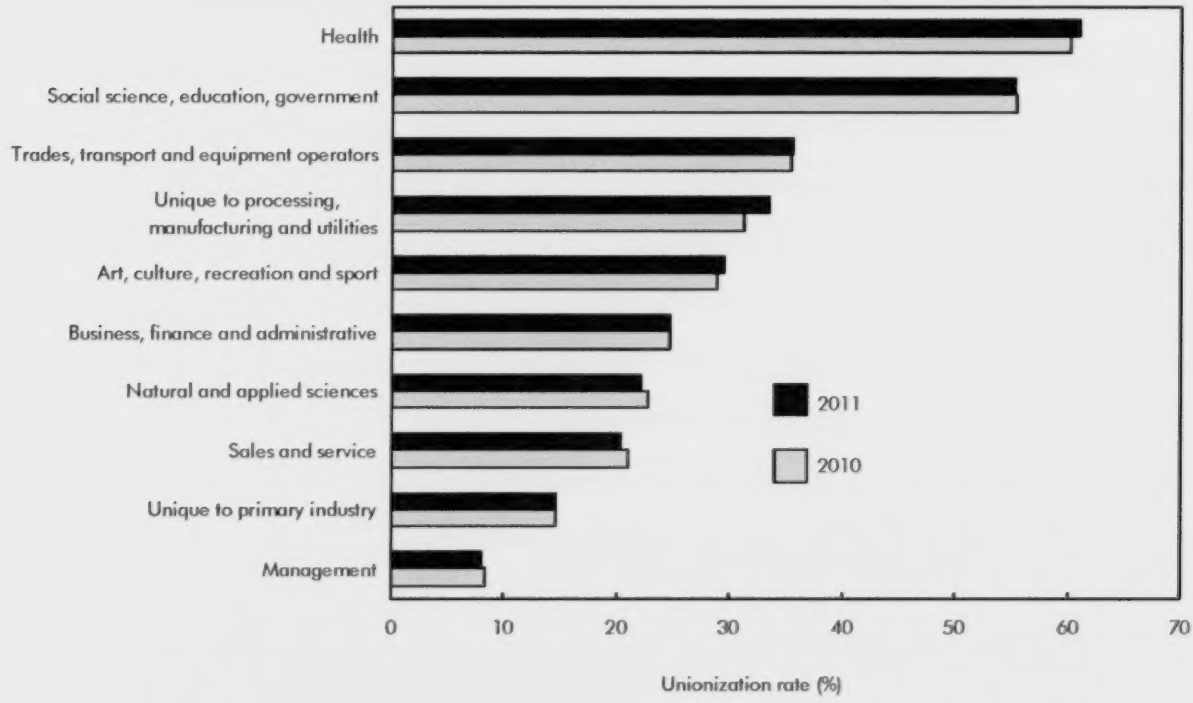


Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, January-to-June averages.

Changes in the unionization rate also varied across 10 major occupational groups (Chart C). Unionization declined most in sales and services, and in natural and applied sicences. Conversely, it rose notably in occupations unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities. Changes in the unionization rate were more modest among other major occupational categories.

Finally, the number of employees who were not union members but were covered by a collective agreement averaged 295,000 in the first half of 2011, an increase from last year's total of 288,000.

Chart C Unionization in community service occupations far outpaced that in others



Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, January-to-June averages.

Table 1 Union membership and coverage by selected characteristics

	2010			2011		
	Total employees	Union density		Total employees	Union density	
		Members	Coverage[1]		Members	Coverage[1]
	'000	%	%	'000	%	%
Both sexes	**14,258**	**29.6**	**31.6**	**14,507**	**29.7**	**31.7**
Men	7,049	28.2	30.4	7,244	28.2	30.3
Women	7,209	30.9	32.8	7,263	31.1	33.0
Sector[2]						
Public	3,509	71.2	74.8	3,600	71.1	74.7
Private	10,749	16.0	17.5	10,907	16.0	17.5
Age						
15 to 24	2,281	14.9	16.5	2,329	14.5	16.4
25 to 54	9,920	32.0	34.1	9,963	32.1	34.3
25 to 44	6,475	30.0	32.2	6,453	30.0	32.1
45 to 54	3,445	35.8	37.8	3,510	36.1	38.3
55 and over	2,057	34.4	36.3	2,215	34.3	36.2
Education						
Less than Grade 9	277	24.0	25.3	247	23.1	24.9
Some high school	1,295	20.4	22.0	1,244	19.6	21.0
High school graduation	2,858	25.7	27.0	2,817	24.8	26.3
Some postsecondary	1,205	22.6	24.6	1,230	21.7	23.9
Postsecondary certificate or diploma	5,032	33.3	35.4	5,251	33.7	35.8
University degree	3,591	33.6	36.3	3,718	34.0	36.5
Province						
Atlantic	954	30.3	31.7	951	31.5	33.2
Newfoundland and Labrador	193	37.9	39.7	200	38.1	39.9
Prince Edward Island	58	30.7	33.0	59	30.2	33.1
Nova Scotia	388	28.4	29.6	386	30.1	31.7
New Brunswick	314	27.8	29.2	305	29.0	30.8
Quebec	3,327	36.1	39.3	3,385	36.3	39.6
Ontario	5,553	26.5	27.9	5,669	26.6	28.2
Prairies	2,587	27.1	29.6	2,672	26.5	28.4
Manitoba	524	35.9	38.1	537	35.1	36.9
Saskatchewan	422	33.8	35.9	427	33.8	35.5
Alberta	1,641	22.6	25.2	1,707	22.0	23.9
British Columbia	1,838	30.4	31.8	1,830	30.4	31.9
Work status						
Full-time	11,530	31.1	33.2	11,721	31.1	33.3
Part-time	2,728	23.5	25.0	2,785	23.6	25.1
Industry						
Goods-producing	2,962	26.5	28.6	3,062	26.9	28.7
Agriculture	100	2.7	3.2	114	4.5	4.7
Mining, quarrying, oil and gas	277	20.3	23.1	292	19.3	21.2
Utilities	146	61.6	65.5	144	63.8	66.2
Construction	801	30.3	32.0	838	30.3	31.6
Manufacturing	1,638	24.0	26.2	1,675	24.9	26.9
Service-producing	11,296	30.4	32.4	11,445	30.4	32.5
Trade	2,378	13.1	14.4	2,371	12.2	13.8
Transportation and warehousing	645	41.3	42.8	690	41.1	42.5
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	909	8.2	9.2	893	8.8	9.8
Professional, scientific and technical	821	4.2	5.3	825	3.9	5.0
Business, building and other support	495	14.3	16.2	512	16.0	18.2
Education	1,207	67.0	70.9	1,209	67.6	71.6
Health care and social assistance	1,778	52.9	55.3	1,831	52.7	54.7
Information and cultural	625	26.9	28.3	647	25.3	27.5
Accommodation and food	978	7.0	7.8	981	7.3	8.1
Other	524	9.8	11.0	519	9.9	11.2
Public administration	935	68.5	73.4	968	66.5	72.0

Table 1 Union membership and coverage by selected characteristics (concluded)

	2010			2011		
	Total employees	Union density		Total employees	Union density	
		Members	Coverage[1]		Members	Coverage[1]
	'000	%	%	'000	%	%
Occupation						
Management	1,019	8.3	10.9	980	8.0	11.0
Business, finance and administrative	2,751	24.7	26.5	2,828	24.6	26.4
Professional	407	16.1	17.9	424	16.7	18.4
Financial and administrative	734	25.3	27.4	733	25.7	27.7
Clerical	1,610	26.6	28.3	1,671	26.1	27.8
Natural and applied sciences	1,098	22.8	24.9	1,097	22.1	24.1
Health	951	60.2	62.4	996	61.0	62.9
Professional	107	38.2	44.7	113	41.0	44.4
Nursing	278	78.5	80.5	290	79.1	81.0
Technical	223	59.8	61.0	253	59.3	60.9
Support staff	342	52.5	54.2	340	53.6	55.1
Social and public service	1,437	55.4	58.7	1,432	55.3	58.7
Legal, social and religious workers	714	37.1	40.0	716	34.6	37.6
Teachers and professors	724	73.5	77.2	716	76.0	79.9
Secondary and elementary	492	85.9	88.0	483	87.1	89.3
Other	232	47.1	54.3	233	53.0	60.4
Art, culture, recreation and sport	341	28.9	30.8	351	29.5	31.3
Sales and service	3,716	21.0	22.5	3,747	20.3	22.0
Wholesale	386	5.5	6.8	397	5.2	5.9
Retail	1,080	13.2	14.3	1,053	10.7	12.0
Food and beverage	527	10.1	10.8	536	9.0	9.9
Protective services	251	57.6	62.4	262	55.8	62.1
Child care and home support	200	45.4	48.4	186	47.2	48.8
Travel and accommodation	1,272	25.6	27.0	1,313	26.3	28.0
Trades, transport and equipment operators	1,968	35.4	37.4	2,058	35.5	37.4
Contractors and supervisors	138	29.0	30.9	141	29.8	32.6
Construction trades	283	35.7	37.2	284	39.0	40.6
Other trades	760	37.7	40.0	803	36.6	38.3
Transportation equipment operators	484	37.0	38.7	520	36.2	38.1
Helpers and labourers	303	29.5	32.2	311	31.1	32.8
Unique to primary industry	241	14.6	15.9	260	14.6	16.0
Unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities	736	31.3	33.2	758	33.4	35.4
Machine operators and assemblers	590	30.7	32.6	609	33.1	35.2
Labourers	146	33.6	35.3	149	34.5	36.4
Workplace size						
Under 20 employees	4,806	13.4	14.7	4,782	13.1	14.5
20 to 99 employees	4,707	29.8	32.0	4,819	30.1	32.3
100 to 500 employees	2,949	41.1	43.5	3,024	40.5	42.8
Over 500 employees	1,797	53.7	56.5	1,882	53.1	56.0
Job tenure						
1 to 12 months	2,855	16.0	18.0	3,077	15.7	17.6
Over 1 year to 5 years	4,936	24.3	26.1	4,758	24.1	25.9
Over 5 years to 9 years	2,012	31.6	33.6	2,101	32.1	34.0
Over 9 years to 14 years	1,657	36.5	38.2	1,757	38.4	40.2
Over 14 years	2,798	47.4	49.9	2,815	47.1	49.8
Job status						
Permanent	12,434	30.0	31.9	12,600	29.9	31.9
Non-permanent	1,824	27.3	29.7	1,907	28.0	30.5

1. Union members and persons who are not union members but covered by collective agreements (for example, some religious group members).
2. Public sector employees are those working for government departments or agencies; Crown corporations; or publicly funded schools, hospitals or other institutions. Private sector employees are all other wage and salary earners.

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey, January-to-June averages.

2010 annual averages

Approximately 4.2 million employees (29.5%) belonged to a union in 2010 and another 293,000 (2.0%) were covered by a collective agreement (Table 2).

The public sector, which consisted of government, Crown corporations, and publicly funded schools or hospitals, had 71.4% of its employees belonging to a union. This was more than four times the rate for the private sector (16.0%).

Approximately one-third of full-time employees belonged to a union, compared with just under one-fourth of the part-time. Also, 30.0% of permanent employees were union members, compared with 26.2% of the non-permanent.

Unionization rates also varied by age group with 36.3% of those aged 45 to 54 being members of a union as compared to 14.3% of those aged 15 to 24. High unionization rates were also found among those with a university degree (33.7%) or a post-secondary certificate or diploma (33.2%); in Newfoundland and Labrador (37.3%) and in Quebec (36.0%); as well as in public administration (68.7%), educational services (66.7%), and utilities (64.7%); and health care occupations (61.3%). Low unionization rates were recorded in Alberta (22.6%); in agriculture (2.8%) and professional, scientific and technical services (4.5%); and in wholesale occupations.(5.2%).

Table 2 Union membership, 2010

	Total employees	Union member[1]	
		Total	Density
	'000	'000	%
Both sexes	**14,371**	**4,240**	**29.5**
Men	7,175	2,023	28.2
Women	7,196	2,217	30.8
Sector[2]			
Public	3,511	2,507	71.4
Private	10,860	1,733	16.0
Age			
15 to 24	2,362	338	14.3
25 to 54	9,892	3,177	32.1
25 to 44	6,407	1,911	29.8
45 to 54	3,485	1,266	36.3
55 and over	2,117	725	34.2
Education			
Less than Grade 9	272	69	25.3
Some high school	1,295	263	20.3
High school graduation	2,851	721	25.3
Some postsecondary	1,219	268	21.9
Postsecondary certificate or diploma	5,127	1,704	33.2
University degree	3,607	1,216	33.7
Province			
Atlantic	959	288	30.0
Newfoundland and Labrador	197	74	37.3
Prince Edward Island	59	18	30.3
Nova Scotia	392	111	28.4
New Brunswick	312	85	27.4
Quebec	3,369	1,214	36.0
Ontario	5,593	1,481	26.5
Prairies	2,626	710	27.0
Manitoba	530	189	35.7
Saskatchewan	423	143	33.9
Alberta	1,674	377	22.6
British Columbia	1,824	547	30.0
Work status			
Full-time	11,683	3,621	31.0
Part-time	2,688	619	23.0
Industry			
Goods-producing	3,049	812	26.6
Agriculture	113	3	2.8
Mining, quarrying, oil and gas	284	57	20.2
Utilities	148	96	64.7
Construction	852	257	30.2
Manufacturing	1,652	398	24.1
Service-producing	11,322	3,428	30.3
Trade	2,391	307	12.8
Transportation and warehousing	664	275	41.4
Finance, insurance, real estate and leasing	900	76	8.4
Professional, scientific and technical	819	37	4.5
Business, building and other support	506	73	14.5
Education	1,153	769	66.7
Health care and social assistance	1,793	953	53.2
Information, culture and recreation	645	164	25.5
Accommodation and food	973	71	7.3
Other	523	46	8.9
Public administration	956	657	68.7

Differences between the sexes

For the seventh year in a row, the unionization rate for women in 2010 surpassed that of men (30.8% versus 28.2%). The gap widened slightly by 0.1 percentage points, as compared to that in 2009.

Among men, part-time employees had a much lower rate than full-time employees (18.3% versus 29.5%). Among women, the gap was narrower (25.1% versus 32.8%) (data not shown). The unionization rate for women in the public sector (73.2%) exceeded that of men (68.5%), reflecting women's presence in public administration, and in teaching and health positions. However, in the private sector, only 12.5% of women were unionized, compared with 19.0% of men. The lower rate among women reflected their predominance in sales and several service occupations.

A higher-than-average rate was recorded among men with a post-secondary certificate or diploma (33.0%). For women, the highest rate was among those with a university degree (39.5%), reflecting unionization in occupations like health care and teaching.

Among those in permanent positions, the rate for men (28.7%) was lower than that for women (31.3%). The gap was slightly more among those in non-permanent positions, (27.6% for women versus 24.8% for men).

Table 2 Union membership, 2010 (concluded)

	Total employees	Union member[1]	
		Total	Density
	'000	'000	%
Occupation			
Management	1,005	86	8.6
Business, finance and administrative	2,764	685	24.8
Professional	410	69	16.9
Financial and administrative	754	191	25.4
Clerical	1,601	424	26.5
Natural and applied sciences	1,092	253	23.1
Health	956	586	61.3
Professional	104	44	42.1
Nursing	286	226	79.2
Technical	228	135	59.3
Support staff	339	181	53.3
Social and public service	1,414	777	54.9
Legal, social and religious workers	715	262	36.7
Teachers and professors	700	515	73.6
Secondary and elementary	471	404	85.9
Other	229	110	48.1
Art, culture, recreation and sport	347	97	28.1
Sales and service	3,722	762	20.5
Wholesale	386	20	5.2
Retail	1,078	141	13.1
Food and beverage	533	52	9.7
Protective services	253	145	57.4
Child care and home support	184	80	43.6
Travel and accommodation	1,288	325	25.2
Trades, transport and equipment operators	2,048	719	35.1
Contractors and supervisors	142	41	29.0
Construction trades	297	110	36.9
Other trades	781	290	37.1
Transportation equipment operators	499	182	36.4
Helpers and labourers	330	97	29.5
Unique to primary industry	274	40	14.4
Unique to processing, manufacturing and utilities	750	236	31.4
Machine operators and assemblers	608	189	31.0
Labourers	141	47	33.2
Workplace size			
Under 20 employees	4,832	645	13.3
20 to 99 employees	4,756	1,408	29.6
100 to 500 employees	2,961	1,210	40.9
Over 500 employees	1,822	977	53.6
Job tenure			
1 to 12 months	2,975	464	15.6
Over 1 year to 5 years	4,876	1,176	24.1
Over 5 years to 9 years	2,023	637	31.5
Over 9 years to 14 years	1,673	615	36.8
Over 14 years	2,824	1,347	47.7
Job status			
Permanent	12,449	3,735	30.0
Non-permanent	1,922	505	26.2

1. Excludes non-members covered by a collective agreement.
2. Public sector employees are those working for government departments or agencies; Crown corporations; or publicly funded schools, hospitals or other institutions. Private sector employees are all other wage and salary earners.

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

Average earnings and usual hours

Earnings are generally higher in unionized as compared to non-unionized jobs. Factors other than collective bargaining provisions contribute to this. These include varying distributions of unionized employees by age, sex, job tenure, industry, occupation, firm size, and geographical location. The effects of these factors are not examined here. However, unionized workers and jobs clearly have characteristics associated with higher earnings. For example, unionization is higher for older workers, those with more education, those with long tenure, and those in larger workplaces. Still, a wage premium exists, which, after controlling for employee and workplace characteristics, has been estimated at 7.7% (Fang and Verma 2002).

Average hourly earnings of unionized workers were higher than those of non-unionized workers in 2010 (Table 3). This held true for both full-time employees ($26.72 versus $22.71) and part-timers ($22.09 versus $14.02). Unionized part-time employees not only had higher hourly earnings, but they also worked more (19.1 hours versus 16.7). This led to a larger gap in weekly earnings ($427.26 versus $240.39).

Table 3 Average earnings and usual hours by union and job status, 2010

	Hourly earnings			Usual weekly hours, main job		
	All employees	Full-time	Part-time	All employees	Full-time	Part-time
		$			hours	
Both sexes	22.53	24.04	15.96	35.1	39.2	17.3
Union member	26.04	26.72	22.09	35.6	38.4	19.1
Union coverage[1]	26.04	26.74	21.93	35.6	38.5	18.9
Not a union member[2]	20.92	22.71	14.02	34.9	39.6	16.7
Men	24.33	25.54	15.02	37.7	40.4	16.4
Union member	26.92	27.41	20.79	38.0	39.6	17.9
Union coverage[1]	26.96	27.48	20.70	38.0	39.7	17.7
Not a union member[2]	23.18	24.63	13.58	37.5	40.8	16.1
Women	20.74	22.26	16.38	32.6	37.8	17.6
Union member	25.24	25.97	22.51	33.4	37.2	19.5
Union coverage[1]	25.18	25.93	22.34	33.4	37.2	19.4
Not a union member[2]	18.59	20.30	14.23	32.2	38.1	17.0
Atlantic	19.70	20.76	14.21	36.5	40.2	17.2
Union member	24.42	24.68	22.01	37.5	39.4	20.1
Union coverage[1]	24.48	24.77	21.95	37.5	39.5	19.8
Not a union member[2]	17.49	18.71	12.31	36.0	40.6	16.6
Quebec	21.13	22.44	15.60	34.2	38.0	17.8
Union member	24.10	24.56	21.29	35.0	37.5	19.6
Union coverage[1]	23.94	24.43	20.97	35.0	37.5	19.4
Not a union member[2]	19.30	21.01	13.44	33.6	38.4	17.1
Ontario	23.22	24.96	15.64	35.1	39.3	17.0
Union member	27.49	28.51	21.34	35.7	38.6	18.3
Union coverage[1]	27.50	28.56	21.20	35.7	38.7	18.2
Not a union member[2]	21.57	23.47	14.12	34.9	39.6	16.6
Prairies	23.72	25.12	17.00	36.1	40.1	17.2
Union member	26.78	27.37	23.60	36.0	39.1	19.2
Union coverage[1]	26.98	27.59	23.55	36.1	39.2	19.2
Not a union member[2]	22.37	24.06	14.71	36.2	40.5	16.5
British Columbia	22.78	24.37	16.91	34.7	39.3	17.4
Union member	26.33	26.97	23.42	35.2	38.7	19.2
Union coverage[1]	26.45	27.12	23.38	35.2	38.7	19.1
Not a union member[2]	21.09	23.02	14.56	34.4	39.6	16.8

1. Union members and persons who are not union members but covered by collective agreements (for example, some religious group members).
2. Workers who are neither union members nor covered by collective agreements.
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey.

On average, full-time unionized women earned 95% as much per hour as their male counterparts. In contrast, those working part-time earned 8% more.

Wage settlements, inflation and labour disputes

The wage rate increase in 2010 was lower as compared to that in the previous year (1.8 versus 2.4%) (Table 4). In 2010 the increase in wages was equal to the rate of inflation. For the first time in 5 years, the wage gain in the private sector exceeded that in the public sector (2.1% versus 1.6%). This trend continued in the first three months of 2011 whereby the gains stood at 2.2% in the private sector and 1.2% in the public sector.

Table 4 Major wage settlements, inflation and labour disputes

	Average annual increase in base wage rates[1]				Labour disputes and time lost[2]			
Year	Public sector employees[3]	Private sector employees[3]	Total employees	Annual change in consumer price index[1]	Strikes and lockouts[4]	Workers involved	Person-days not worked	Proportion of estimated working time
			%			'000	'000	%
1999	1.9	2.7	2.2	1.8	412	159	2,434	0.08
2000	2.5	2.4	2.5	2.7	378	143	1,644	0.05
2001	3.4	3.0	3.3	2.5	381	221	2,203	0.07
2002	2.9	2.6	2.8	2.2	294	166	2,986	0.09
2003	2.9	1.2	2.5	2.8	266	79	1,730	0.05
2004	1.4	2.3	1.8	1.8	297	259	3,185	0.09
2005	2.3	2.5	2.3	2.2	260	199	4,148	0.11
2006	2.6	2.3	2.5	2.0	151	42	793	0.02
2007	3.4	3.3	3.3	2.2	206	66	1,771	0.05
2008	3.5	2.5	3.2	2.3	188	41	876	0.02
2009	2.5	1.8	2.4	0.3	158	67	2,169	0.06
2010	1.6	2.1	1.8	1.8	175	57	1,209	0.03
2011[5]	1.2	2.2	1.3	1.0	..	..	..	..

1. Involving 500 or more employees.
2. Involving 1 worker or more.
3. Public sector employees are those working for government departments or agencies; Crown corporations; or publicly funded schools, hospitals or other institutions. Private sector employees are all other wage and salary earners.
4. Minimum of ten person-days not worked.
5. 2011 data refer to January to March only.

Sources: Statistics Canada, Prices Division; Human Resources and Social Development Canada, Workplace Information Directorate.

Annual statistics on strikes, lockouts and person-days lost are affected by several factors, including collective bargaining timetables, size of the unions involved, strike or lockout duration, and state of the economy. The number of collective agreements up for renewal in a year determines the potential for industrial disputes. Union size and strike or lockout duration determine the number of person-days lost. The state of the economy influences the likelihood of an industrial dispute, given that one is legally possible. The proportion of estimated working time lost due to strikes and lockouts decreased to 0.01% in 2011 from 0.03% in 2010.

Perspectives

Reference

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